3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

forked rest attached to the barrel. A quarter of the circumference is occupied by a pile of rolled-up felts, bolsters and rugs; the wealth of the owners may be accurately gauged from the size of this pile, just as that of cottagers in a German forest may, according to Mark Twain, be judged by the dimensions of the manure-heap outside their door.

In some parts of the Chinese Pamirs the Kirghiz are said to be dying out, but I do not think this is the case among the Alps of Qungur. We found that few households contained less than two children; one woman had four and another told D. that she had had eight. Infant mortality is high, and the race is not prolific; if it were, the Malthusian problems raised would be insoluble in a country where the grazing, though excellent in quality, is strictly limited in quantity. But the Kirghiz of the Qaratash basin are by no means decadent or weakly, and the scanty population is, if anything, increasing. Considering their complete ignorance of hygiene and rules of diet, they are a remarkably healthy race, thanks no doubt to the open-air life they lead and to their avoidance of houses. The chief ailments D. came across in her amateur doctorings (which were enormously appreciated and had, so far as we knew, no fatal results) were skin diseases, indigestion and other stomach troubles, as well as running sores which looked in some cases as if they might be tuberculous. Some of the faces were pitted by small-pox, but not badly. It is interesting to note that the Qizil Tagh Kirghiz, who have given up tents and taken to houses, are subject to epidemics and are probably dying out. In one of the valleys of that region we passed a whole settlement which had been depopulated three years before by an epidemic of some fatal disease and was now deserted. Though the Kirghiz never wash, their *aq-ois* are as a rule carefully swept and free from vermin, and we seldom had any qualms about sleeping in them on occasion.

The women, as has already been noticed, are frank, fearless, self-reliant and natural, in refreshing contrast to their Turki sisters, at any rate in the towns.

"There is a sort of Scotch-ness about them" (says D. in one of her letters from Kaying Bashi), "a common-sense that is entirely lacking in the people of the plains. They love woolly gloves, muslin, mirrors, buttons, pins and so on because of their usefulness, not only because of their novelty, and would rather have enough plain stuff to make a dress or coat than the yard or two of bright-coloured satin which a Turki woman would immediately go for. . . . There is one extremely attractive and coquettish lady in this valley, but she is

/Chinese Moslems (Dungans)/

religious teachings. According to the religious code it is obligatory for a man of means to contribute a certain amount of his wealth to public charity. Next to worship, this is the most important duty in Moslem society. The original idea of helping the poor and needy evolved into a tax (ten per cent on agricultural produce and two and one-half per cent on animals) collected from all believers for religious and public welfare purposes. Another form of alms, the sadaqa, is a voluntary offering. Public welfare supported by the tax, after the collector's fee is deducted, includes freeing slaves, assistance to persons who became indebted for good reason, making holy war to defend the people and the faith, and aiding needy travelers.

During the month of Ramadan (fasting) donations and offerings are collected for public welfare purposes. The amount is not fixed, and the act of giving is voluntary. A sense of public responsibility is strong among these people. Not only do they give regular allowances to the needy in their own communities, but they help needy outsiders of their own faith.

The Hajjis, or those who have completed the pilgrimage to Mecca, are highly respected in the Moslem community, and wear special badges to mark their distinction. The opportunity to journey to Mecca is the dream of all Moslems.

c. Virtue

It is important for the individual to cultivate the true concept of peace and submission. The concept of peace involves such ideals as mutual cooperation and aid among mankind, mutual understanding among religions and peaceful co-existence of nations to achieve world brotherhood. The concept of submission means to submit oneself wholly to Allah and follow his teachings, sacrificing self-interest for the promotion of happiness for mankind.

Personal cleanliness, both internal and external, is most important. Cleanliness in eating habits and personal hygiene is thought to develop a clean soul, free of evil thoughts and immoral conduct.

d. Racial superiority

The Chinese Moslems regard themselves as a special group, superior to their Chinese neighbors. As students and officials, their attitude toward respect for the emperor and for Confucius has, in the past, been one of compromise. Compelled by law to conform, they excused themselves on the grounds that they did so outwardly but not in their hearts. The old and the new sects of Chinese Moslems, although bitterly hostile toward each other and at times engaged in armed conflict, on the whole present a united front toward the Chinese and the rest of the world.

/Turkic Peoples of Sinkiang/

753 Moslems. No servant of Allah who was in a plague stricken city
779 ought to depart from it. He must remain steadfast, counting upon God and knowing that nothing will happen except what Allah has ascribed for him. If anything should befall him, he would earn the reward of martyrdom in the future world. The Prophet declared that contagious diseases, such as cholera and the plague, had no reality independently of Allah.

753 Older pre-Islamic beliefs prevalent among the people of East-
776 ern Turkestan attribute the source and cause of diseases and death
754 to evil spirits, which they call "jins", and which inhabit the body after the evil eye has been cast upon a person. Belief in the evil eye is extremely strong among the women. Skrine recorded some of the superstitions about the cause of disease and death: "If a woman feels liverish, she at once concludes that she has been bewitched, and goes to the du'a-khwan (witch-doctor).... There
754 are several death-spells in use. If a woman wishes her husband to die, she washes her head on seven successive Wednesday mornings; another method is to wear two caps, one on top of the other, for seven weeks. Similarly, a man puts a death-spell on his wife by combing his beard with two combs. In most countries where witchcraft and the evil-eye are believed in, the victim's hairs, nail-parings, etc., are peculiarly valuable to the enemy who wished to cast a spell upon him. In Chinese Turkestan, by a curious extension of this idea, this potency attaches also to the kafsh-massi or slippers which are worn over the long boots when outside and are removed on entering a house. If an enemy's slippers are found lying neatly together outside the room in which he sits, they are turned upside down or placed one on top of the other. If an enemy's death is desired the slippers are taken up and thrown down haphazardly.... A widely prevalent idea is that the death of a person affects the health of his or her surviving relatives." (Skrine, C.P., Chinese Central Asia, pp. 187-88).

Aside from these beliefs, the common people are unaware of
753 the modern, scientific explanations of the causes of disease and death. Only those who attend government schools (as opposed to the Moslem religious schools) are likely to learn some facts about human physiology and the existence of disease-carrying germs.

1. Sanitary measures included in the Moslem religion

779 The Moslem religious code, however, provides its own sani-
515 tary measures that are closely observed by the population. Most of these rules concern the cleanliness of the body, both for the purification of the soul, and for the sake of health. A Moslem is required to take a partial ablution before each of the five daily prayers. The partial ablution (wudzu) consists first of washing the hands up to the wrists, cleaning the mouth with water, washing the whole face from the forehead to the chin and from one ear to the other, wiping the head with wet hands and washing the feet

779 up to the ankles. A special provision is made for those to whom
• 515 water is not available because of their being on a journey or being sick, etc..."and if you are sick or on a journey or one of you came from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and hands therewith." (5:6) A complete ablution of the body is required when the body has been soiled to a greater extent. Though not always strictly observed, these religious habits are followed quite closely by the majority of the population.

2. The predominant diseases in Sinkiang

164 The predominant diseases in Eastern Turkestan which were recorded by Grenard and Pevtsov are the following: goiters, syphillis, gonorrhea, smallpox, scabies, tuberculosis, the Baghdad boil (a disease brought over from the Middle East), rheumatism, often connected with the effects of venereal diseases, trachoma and other eye illnesses, dental troubles, inflammation of the joints, malaria and some cases of leprosy. Skin diseases are very common among the population. The Eastern Turks [515] seldom change their clothing, including their underclothes, and their fur hats are hardly ever taken off. This often results in the growth of parasitic vermin. The excessive dust and dirt are very conducive to the spread of skin diseases. Unfortunately, no figures are avilable on the incidence of different diseases. Most feared are the epidemic diseases which spread rapidly and the incurable diseases, like leprosy. There is a popular proverb in [539] Eastern Turkestan that says the following: "Flee from the leprous as you would from a lion."

3. The local doctors

759 The two most popular types of doctors in Eastern Turkestan
756 are those who practice Arabic medicine, and those who practice witchcraft. Arabic medical science is fairly well developed and includes some knowledge of human physiology, methods of curing certain diseases and even some surgical techniques. Most of the mosques have hospitals attached to them for the care of the ill and the injured. However, the knowledge of those doctors practicing Arabic medicine in Eastern Turkestan is quite limited. There has been no great progress in their methods since the 11th and 12th centuries. According to C.P. Skrine, the witch doctors are much more popular than the Islamic doctors. The witch doctors are called bakhshis in Yarkand and du'a-khwans or jadugars in Kashgar. The fees of the witch doctors are relatively high, and the more famous of them are very well-off. In return for their fees they compose spells and perform incantations to drive away the demons which possess the patient.